



GELLIGAER TIMES

NEWSLETTER OF GELLIGAER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Issue No. 49 November 2020

MESSAGE TO READERS OF GELLIGAER TIMES FROM GHS CHAIR

In the absence of a newsletter editor, this newsletter, with

- News items
- George Seaborne and local heritage
- Supplement – Seasonal items

has been prepared by GHS committee. I hope it has something to interest you, and, perhaps, some of you will respond with comments and/or questions, or even indicate that you would like to edit a future issue. If so, please contact chairman@gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk or www.gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk

GELLIGAER TIMES Issue no.

David Mills drew GHS Committee's attention to the fact that this is newsletter 49, so, with the next issue, *Gelligaer Times* will reach a significant landmark, **number 50**. Under normal circumstances, GHS would probably have celebrated with a cake, but we are living through strange times, and so, perhaps, all we can do is celebrate this landmark by making **number 50** a bigger and better than usual newsletter.

Your contributions will be very welcome.

As it is **number 50**, perhaps you have some 50-related ideas.

- Do you have any photographs from the 1950s? Maybe school class photographs, or photographs taken during trips to Barry or Porthcawl, that you are happy to share with *Gelligaer Times* readers?
- Or stories from the 1950s? Do you remember the Festival of Britain? or the Coronation? the Suez Crisis? *Supernac* Harold Macmillan and *You've never had it so good?*
- Or life in the local area in the 1950s? What games did you play? What books did you read? What television did you watch?
- And 50 landmarks in your life – your (or your parents') 50th birthday, 50th wedding anniversary.
- The first time you saw a £50 note
- Items about any of the 50 states of U.S.A.
- Anything else 50-related?
- Or, indeed, anything that you would like to contribute.

NEWS

At the time of writing, the most recent information on Llancaiach Fawr's website is:

COVID UPDATE 11/11/2020

We are now open for pre-booked tours of the Manor, please call 01443 412248 to make a booking. In line with Welsh Government guidelines we can only accommodate one 'household' (not bubble) at any one time or up to 4 individuals from separate households.

Our *Cafe/Restaurant* is also now open and we are able seat together individuals who live in the same house, and up to 4 individuals from separate households on separate tables.

If you have any queries or for further information please contact us on 01443 412248 or llancaiachfawr@caerphilly.gov.uk

Given the present Welsh Government COVID 19 Regulations regarding indoor meetings, GHS is not able to resume its programme of talks at Llancaiach, but GHS Officers and Committee will continue to review the situation in the light of developments, and update GHS website www.gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk and issue a newsletter when face-to-face meetings can be resumed.

You may like to keep up-to-date with the position in Llancaiach Fawr and with Welsh Government COVID 19 Regulations by checking their websites:

<https://your.caerphilly.gov.uk/llancaiachfawr/content/welcome-llancaiach-fawr>

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

ZOOM TALKS – thank you to those people who responded to the request in *Gelligaer Times* 48, for opinion about GHS delivering talks via Zoom in place of the usual LFM meetings. Details of such talks will be circulated as soon as possible.

And a date for your diary – we hope that the situation will have improved by March 2021 as Llancaiach Fawr has reserved **Saturday 20 March 2021** for the conference that was postponed in March 2020. We will see how things develop and, hopefully, booking forms will be available in January 2021. Thank you to those who left their fee in GHS. You will be contacted in January 2021.

If you wish to make a **payment to GHS**, you can

- Post cheque to the Treasurer (who will send the address to those who ask)
- BACs payment (Treasurer will supply GHS bank details to those who ask)
- Set up a direct debit/standing order (Treasurer will supply details to those who ask)

REMINDER -- Deadline for submissions for the Diamond Jubilee publication is 31 December 2020.

GHS continues to receive a variety of **QUERIES RELATING TO THE HISTORY AND HERITAGE OF GELLIGAER PARISH AND NEIGHBOURING AREAS**. One recent query was about the fifteen WWI casualties named on Troedrhifwuch war memorial. If anyone can shed any light on those unidentified to date, please contact chairman@gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk

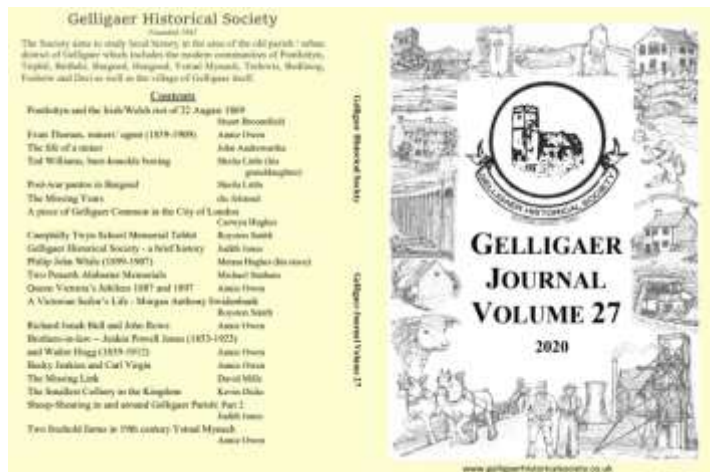
PUBLICATIONS THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST TO YOU

The cover of GHS journal *Gelligaer* Volume 27 lists the varied and interesting articles in the volume. Copies are available via www.gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk

One amendment -- *page 120, the sub-heading five lines from the bottom of the page, should read **The move to Church Farm, Mynyddislwyn***

If you would like to contribute to a future journal, please get in touch.

GHS members (2019-20, and any new members 2020-21) who wish to have a copy posted to them, please send your postal address (including post code) to GHS

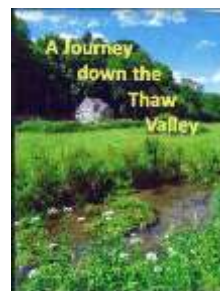


website www.gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk or chairman@gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk In spite of the fact that we do not have our normal outlets (GHS meetings, local libraries and retailers), there has been considerable interest in the journal.

A new publication from Cowbridge and Llantwit Major Local History Societies: *A journey down the Thaw Valley*. Its 120 pages of text and 40 pages of photographs cover aspects of the geology, history, land-use and wildlife found in the valley.

Price £10 with pp £2.50.

Available via cakyoun40@talktalk.net or rob.nottage@btinternet.com



If you have information about publications that may be of interest to *Gelligaer Times* readers, please send details for inclusion in a future newsletter.

NEWPORT CHARTIST CONVENTION 2020

This annual convention has moved from its usual format and Autumn date to a virtual convention. Book NOW www.newportrising.co.uk

Three talks (by Ray Stroud, Dr Joan Allen and Peter Strong, each 45 minutes) on theme of RETRIBUTION focusing on the treatment of Chartists Jenkin Morgan, John Frost and Henry Vincent after the 1839 South Wales Rising

From Tuesday 1 December, talks available at any time of day on www.newportrising.co.uk

LIVE Q & A sessions on ZOOM at 7.30 pm on following evenings:

- FRIDAY 4th Dec, with Ray Stroud, *In Search of Jenkin Morgan*
- SATURDAY 5th Dec, with Dr Joan Allen *Legality and Injustice in the Age of the Chartists, with special reference to Regina vs Frost 1840*
- SUNDAY 6th Dec, with Peter Strong *Henry Vincent: The Monmouth Prison Letters*

PLEASE NOTE Numbers are limited for Q&A sessions. Apply via www.newportrising.co.uk for an invitation to each Zoom meeting.

WELSH HISTORY AND HERITAGE IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.

Brief report of 'Science Seiat: A Conversation about Science and Technology in Welsh History and Heritage', Wednesday 18th November 2020

Howard A. Barnes, OBE DSc FLSW

Myrddin is a Welsh network for 'the historical and social study of science, technology, engineering and medicine', launched in 2014. From the work of the network, it has become clear that Wales needs a national conversation about its history and heritage in science and technology.

Evoking the spirit of eighteenth-century Welsh Methodists, Myrddin decided to arrange a 'seiat' or conversation meeting, believing 'it would be an opportunity to share ideas and visions about how to change the ways we understand our scientific and technological past, and how we can use this history to transform its future'.

Among the societies and organisations who supported the Network in this venture are:

- Newcomen Society
- The Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion
- Richard Price Society
- Cardiff Scientific Society
- South Wales Institute of Engineers Educational Trust
- British Computer Society, South Wales Branch
- National Waterfront Museum, Swansea

In collaboration with the Learned Society of Wales, of which I am a Fellow, Myrddin organised a 'Zoom conversation' on Wednesday 18th November, entitled 'Science Seiat: A Conversation about

Science and Technology in Welsh History and Heritage'. Annie Owen encouraged me to 'attend' the meeting.

Around 50 people 'zoomed' (?) in and, after an introduction by the chairman, Prof. Mike Charlton, Physics Department Swansea University, five experts set the scene for our discussion with short presentations:

- Prof. Iwan Morus of Aberystwyth University History Department spoke on 'The Scientific History and Heritage of Wales: Past and Future'.
- This was followed by Dr. Gareth Roberts on 'Scientists of Wales'.
- The next presentation, by Elin Rhys most interesting and spirited, addressing Science and the Welsh-language Media.
- John Tucker presented a PowerPoint presentation on History of Science and the New Welsh Curriculum.
- Dr. Amanda Rees, Department of Sociology York University, summarised Science and the Welsh environment, taking us back to Sir George Stapleton and the Plant Breeding Station and bringing us up to date on current environmental issues.

Discussion then followed, seeking in part to address the pre-posed question: 'What is science to Wales, and Wales to science? Our country has a long and rich history of science, but despite the significant contribution that Welsh people have made to our understanding of the world around us, we still tend to think of science as something alien, something that doesn't really belong to us. We think that science isn't an important part of our history.' How can this be changed? The media obviously has a large part to play as well as formal education.

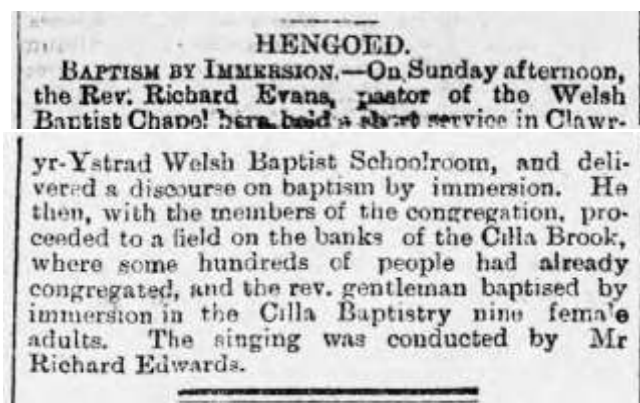
The meeting was always going to be open-ended and was successful in the airing of the posed issues. Some urgency was rightly expressed, given the imminence of the anticipated Welsh Science curriculum.

GHS thanks Howard for attending this Seiat and submitting this report.

Readers may recall the following about Jenny Tips in *Gelligaer Times* number 48.

It is interesting to note that Hengoed Colliery was in operation at such an early date. Can any readers identify the *place known by the name of Jenny Tips* mentioned in this extract from a report on Monmouthshire Lent Assizes in *The Cambrian* 9 April 1836 (page 4).

In response ---Some of those with research interests east of Rhymney river (including some GHS members) have told us **the newspaper got it wrong**, so don't believe everything you read in newspapers! check it out. More details on Jenny Tips to appear in *Gelligaer Times* 50.



And, a reminder of the interesting local pieces of information on website [Welsh Newspapers Online - Home \(library.wales\)](http://WelshNewspapersOnline-Home.library.wales), as illustrated by this extract from *South Wales Daily News*, 27 November 1894, page 7.

Readers, please send any interesting items you discover to chairman@gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk

SHOULD GEORGE SEABORNE BE AN HONORARY MEMBER OF GHS?

GHS member, David Mills, continuing his researches into the development of the coal industry in the parish of Gelligaer, has found some interesting information in 1898 newspapers (<https://newspapers.library.wales/>) that reflect contemporary knowledge and interest in local history and heritage.

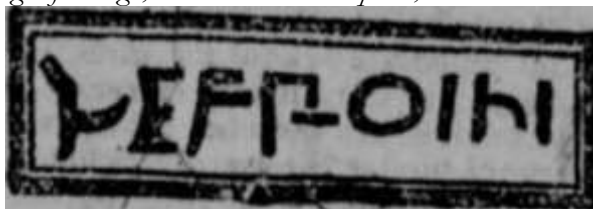
Perhaps George Seaborne merits a place as Honorary member of GHS, as his plea (in the extract below) for a *scholarly enthusiast with leisure to settle down in it* [Gelligaer parish] *to find out and tell us all that is possible of the history* is not dissimilar to the intention of those local historians whose work culminated not only in the publication of *The Gelligaer Story*, but also in the founding of Gelligaer Historical Society, while his hope, expressed in his letter published on 12 October, that *the spirit of inquiry has been aroused in many*, is shared by those interested in local history and heritage today.

On 7 September 1898 *Western Mail* (page 7) carried the following:

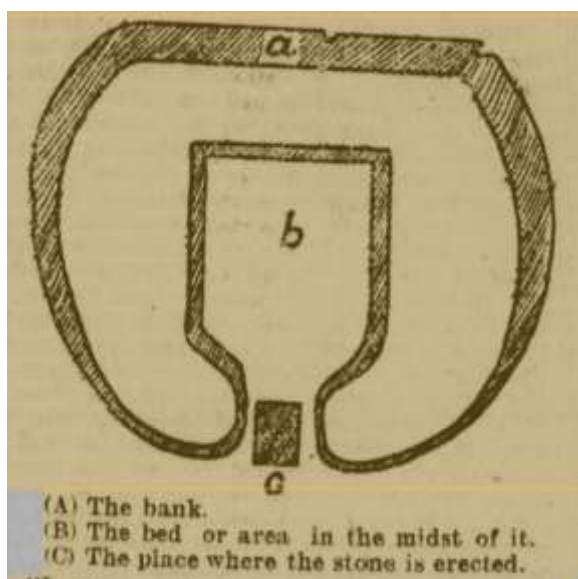
HISTORICAL REMAINS AT GELLIGAER WANTED, A SCHOLARLY ENTHUSIAST

Mr George Seaborne, of Hengoed, writes:-

In looking for some information with regard to old farming customs I came across the following passage in a book published about 150 years ago:- "On a mountain called Kevn Gelhi Gaer, not far from ... Kaer-Phyll, in the way to March-nadly-Wayn, I observed (as it seemed to me) a remarkable monument, which may perhaps deserve the notice of the curious. It is well known by the name of Y Maen Hir, and is a rude stone pillar of a kind of quadrangular form, about eight-foot high, and with this inscription, to be read downwards:-



"It stands, not erect, but somewhat inclining; whether casually or that it was intended is uncertain. Close at the bottom of it, on that side it inclines on, there is a small bank or intrenchment, inclosing a space of about six yards; and in the midst thereof a square area, both of which may be better delineated than described:-



"I suppose that in the bed or area in the midst a person has been interred, and that the inscription must be read Trefroiti or Deffroitti, which is, doubtless, the same with the British proper name Dyvrod, expressed otherwise in Latin Dubrotus and, perhaps, Dubritius."

The parish of Gelligaer is extremely rich in historical remains, and the one want is for a scholarly enthusiast with leisure to settle down in it to find out and tell us all that is

possible of the history of *Capel Gwladis, Capel Brithdir, the Roman encampment near the Parish Church, the Roman roads and bridges, and other points of interest in the district. The writer has heard that there are some local histories of Gelligaer in existence in manuscript, and a gentleman named Fothergill has written a pamphlet on the history of the parish, but so far he has not heard of any book or paper on the subject which is open to the general public. A good many coins, ornaments, and weapons of warfare have been found at different times in the parish, and many an article of the greatest value in connection with deciding the dates of occupation and events have been secreted and hidden away which as regards intrinsic value are practically worthless. If a few of the inhabitants of our lovely hills and valleys were as observant and as communicative as the writer who saw and described the stone on Gelligaer Mountain over 150 years ago, what interesting descriptions of hundreds of places of which nothing is now known would be the result. If the re-printing of this extract will lead to a single ray of light being thrown upon the history of any of our local antiquities or in any finds of pottery, coins, weapons, bones, ornaments, buildings, tessellated pavement, or anything else relating to the past being reported, the writer will be amply rewarded.*

This stimulated correspondence in future issues, including:-

- Morien’s letter to the editor *Western Mail*, appearing on 8 September 1898 page 6 under the heading *RELICS OF THE PAST AT GELLIGAER, “MORIEN” CLAIMS FOR EXTREME ANTIQUITY*
- *Western Mail* 9 September 1898 page 6 included George Seaborne’s response to comments by Morien:
- Another letter from Morien appeared in *Western Mail* on 10 September 1898 page 6 under the heading *THE RELICS OF CEVN GELLIGAER.*
- A correspondent (unfortunately, the correspondent’s name and some of the text are missing as a small section of the page has been torn away) of 24, Weston Terrace, Ynysir, and D. T. M. of Merthyr entered the debate, and their letters were published in *Western Mail* on 14 September (page 7).
- *Western Mail* 1 October (page 6) saw the discussion move forward with another letter from Morien appearing under the heading *PROTESTS FROM “MORIEN”, THE ARCHDRUID WITH HIS ANTLERS DOWN and concluding P.S. – Since writing the foregoing I have seen the Rector of Gellygaer, and he stated that, according to an old tradition among the parishioners, the inscription on the Maen Hir was “Deffro da i ti;” – in idiomatic Welsh, this means “May thou awaken in happiness.”*
- *Western Mail* 4 October printed two letters, one from T. H. Thomas (whose identity is unclear) and the other from T. J. Jones, Rector of Gelligaer, under the heading *GELLIGAER ANTIQUITIES.* These letters, focusing on the inscription *Deffro da i ti*, led on to interesting insights into local habits and customs, with the Rector noting *Some archaeologists had construed this inscription as “Deffro i ti” (“Mayest thou have an awakening); whilst others have construed it as something else. Some 60 years ago, and for how long previously no one can tell, this stone was a favourite rendezvous of the shepherd lads from the surrounding farms. Here they met for play and conference. One of these lads – now an old man, viz., William Davies, Penworlod – remains, and he, entirely ignorant of the current correspondence, informed me that in his youth the inscription was well known, and was always rendered as “Deffro da i ti” (“Mayest thou have a good awakening”). Or, as “Morien” translates the idiom, “May thou awaken in happiness.” I informed Mr. Davies of the difference between the ordinary literary construction, “Deffro i ti” and his version “Deffro da i ti,” and the old man remained firm notwithstanding. He insisted that the quality of the awakening was authentic. I have had his statement corroborated by others equally ignorant of the correspondence in your columns, and I have no hesitation whatsoever in receiving their testimony and regarding the inscription as the prayer of pious Christian mourners at the sepulchral monument of a departed friend. I informed “Morien” of this, and told him, also, that it was in keeping with other local traditions concerning the Christian dead. Even now we have “Sul y Coffa” – Commemoration Sunday – when the mourners come to church and visit the grave after a funeral. It is a custom which reaches from the distant past, but it has lost its former significance and purpose. Now it is but a purposeless fashion, except so far as it shows respect for the departed; then it had an aim – viz., to join in special and public prayer in church for the repose and well-being of the departed soul.*

- In his letter dated 5 October, and appearing in *Western Mail* on 12 October (page 3), George Seaborne wrote of his visit to the site on 23 September, when he found *that the small grave, or kist, on the extreme south-west of the group had been rudely opened within the past week or two, and the soil from the interior of the grave disturbed and scattered amongst the loose stones.* And, later in the letter he wrote *No one is a greater admirer of "Morien" than myself, and as, in addition to having been entertained and instructed by his writings, he once took great pains in helping me, a complete stranger to him, I am anxious not to appear to be tilting at him or treating this matter otherwise than in a spirit of inquiry.*

These, and similar contemporary letters to the press, merit attention, and hopefully, a researcher will take this up in the not-too-distant future.

George Seaborne (1855-1937), whose initial letter stimulated the above newspaper correspondence, was a local industrialist and businessman who, in the 1880s and 90s, had interests in local collieries such as Pentrepoeth, Cascade, Cefn Llwyna, Penallta and Gwerna. His wife, Catherine, was the daughter of another local colliery proprietor, William Beddoe. From the 1880s to their respective deaths, he in 1937 and she in 1940, George and Catherine made their home in Brynheulog, Hengoed. George Seaborne played a part in public life serving on Gelligaer and Rhigos Rural District Council at the turn of the century. Like many of his middle class contemporaries in the area, he became a member of St. David's Lodge of Freemasons, Rhymney, appearing on the register in 1889 as a colliery proprietor.

From the sixteenth to the mid-nineteenth century, local gentry and clergy were interested in county history and heritage. While Wales in general, including the counties of Glamorgan and Monmouth, did not see the same breadth and depth of research as in some English counties, there was some important county work in that era. South Wales Record Society published some examples of such county work, viz by Rice Merrick, George Yates, and C. and J. Greenwood (see <http://www.southwalesrecordsociety.co.uk/Publications.htm> for details). The picture changed in the second half of the nineteenth century, partly because the new railways gave people, including clergy and the emerging middle class, access to areas that were previously rather inaccessible. Some of these people applied their newly-acquired skills as architects and surveyors to record the newly-visited historical sites. Thus men like George Seaborne tended to dominate local history studies in that era, as witnessed by the newspaper extracts reproduced above and, more generally, by the work of Cambrian Archaeological Association, which, since its foundation in 1846, has published an annual journal, *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, containing articles by the foremost scholars of the day on historical documents, architectural history, family history and archaeological monuments, finds and excavations.

SUPPLEMENT --- SEASONAL ITEMS

Start with a Christmas quiz (answers are at the end of this newsletter)

1. In the song, *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, nine what did my true love bring to me?
2. In the same song, how many presents IN TOTAL
3. What is the name of George Bailey's guardian angel in the film, *It's a Wonderful Life*?
4. In which Christmas pantomime does Widow Twankey appear?
5. What Christmas item was invented by (or, at least, is attributed to) London baker and wedding-cake specialist, Tom Smith, in 1847?
6. Where did St. Nicholas come from?
7. Who was the first British monarch to broadcast a Christmas message?
8. Which popular 1950s Christmas song by child star Jimmy Boyd was originally banned by the Catholic Church in Boston because it was said to mix sex and Christmas?
9. In what year did Band Aid's record, *Do they know it's Christmas*, top the UK's charts?
10. Who wrote *Auld Lang Syne*?
11. London's Trafalgar Square Christmas tree is traditionally given by which country?

12. From which country does the poinsettia plant originate?
13. Who was Scrooge's dead business partner in Dickens's *Christmas Carol*?
14. What date is St. Stephen's Day?
15. Donner and Blitzen are the names of two of Father Christmas's reindeer – what do their names mean in English?
16. Christmas Island, a territory of the Commonwealth of Australia, is located in which ocean?
17. Yorkshire man, William Strickland, is **believed** to have brought the first what to England in 1526?
18. What is New Year's Eve called in Scotland?
19. Who wrote *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*?
20. Many American states, including Georgia and Indiana, have towns which share which same Christmassy name?

It (is supposed to have) happened on 11th December – but which year?

21. Llewelyn ap Gruffydd (Llewelyn the Last), last native Prince of Wales, was killed at Cilmeri, near Builth Wells. 1282 OR 1382
22. Louis XVI was executed for treason and crimes against the state. 1753 OR 1773 OR 1793
23. 1st yacht race across the Atlantic (started in New Jersey). 1806 OR 1866 OR 1896
24. British High Commander, Henry Bartle Frere, presented an ultimatum to the Zulu king – submit to British rule or face war. 1878 OR 1858 OR 1898
25. David Lloyd George formed his British War Government (may have been 9th December!). 1915 OR 1916 OR 1917
26. Edward VII made a radio broadcast announcing his abdication in order to marry Wallis Simpson. 1936 OR 1937 OR 1938
27. U.S.A. declared war on Germany and Italy. 1940 OR 1941 OR 1942
28. Elvis Presley's *Blue Hawaii* album went to the number 1 spot and JFK provided military helicopters and crews to South Vietnam. 1960 OR 1961 OR 1963
29. Muhammad Ali fought his 61st and last fight, losing to Trevor Berbick and Spacelab 1 arrived at Kennedy Space Centre. 1981 OR 1971 OR 1979
30. Delegates from 150 industrial nations attended a UN climate conference in Kyoto where they reached an agreement to control heat-trapping greenhouse gases (Kyoto Protocol). 1995 OR 1997 OR 1999

NEWSPAPER EXTRACTS ABOUT DECEMBERS PAST

Selected by Judith Jones

***Evening Express*, 28 December 1909**

Notwithstanding the wretched weather which prevailed, Cardiff was visited by many thousands of people on Boxing Day. Excursion trains ran into the city from all parts of South Wales

Matinee and evening performances were given at the New Theatre, the Empire, Panopticon, and the Electric Cinema, and every house was packed. Hundreds of people enjoyed an afternoon's roller-skating on Westgate street and Central Rinks.

What was most surprising of all the day's features was the number of people who braved the elements to witness the annual football match between Cardiff and the Barbarians, quite 25,000 spectators surrounding the playing arena. Though the game was played on a muddy, treacherous ground, the Cardiff players gave a brilliant exhibition of Rugby football, and won by the huge score of ten tries to nil.

For a wonder, not a single eisteddfod or competitive meeting of any kind was held in the city, and thus an opportunity of making a substantial sum of money in aid of local charities was lost.

*Throughout the long period of its existence – it was established nearly 30 years ago – the Cardiff Blue Ribbon Choir has maintained a high standard of proficiency, as its record in the competitive arena indicates. The annual concert at the Cory Hall on Monday night, when a performance of Haydn's *Creation* was given, exemplified the fact that the*

organisation is by no means losing ground, but, unfortunately, though the popular parts were crowded, the attendance on the whole was disappointing.

At Noddfa Chapel, Treorchy, the musical festival was continued on Boxing Day, when in the afternoon a new work by Mr. D. Evans. Mus.Bac. Cardiff, "Rejoice in the Lord," was produced for the first time in Wales, and at once met with a hearty appreciation.

The Porth Harmonic Society, under the conductorship of Mr. Rhys Evans, gave excellent performances of Dr. Parry's "Love of Tarsus" on Christmas and Boxing Days. The building was crowded upon each occasion, and very spirited renderings were given by a well-trained choir of over 200 voices.

Boxing Day, 2 recitals, Jerusalem Chapel, Ton Pentre

Fox hunting, Llanbarry Hounds described as the colliers and farmers' annual hunting day

Eisteddfod at Bridgend with local congregational church – Bargoed male voice choir won, conductor Mr T. R. W. Lewis

Eisteddfod at Nelson The annual eisteddfod in connection with the Ebenezer Calvinistic Methodist, Church was held at Nelson. What follows includes the names of the adjudicators and of the main prize-winners. So if you are interested in researching an eisteddfodwr, it is well worth searching the name in contemporary newspapers.

CHRISTMAS IN SOUTH WALES -- DAY OF SUNSHINE AND PLEASURE

***Evening Express*, 27 December 1909**

Christmas was marked this year in South Wales generally, with very fine, bright weather, which, but for the sodden state of the ground, might be described as genial, and the circumstances lent more than usual attraction to outdoor diversions, especially football matches, of which many were played in South Wales. Three features stand out prominently in the public observance of the day, viz. the large attendance at the places of worship, the popularity of musical performances (oratorio, eisteddfod, and concert), and the usual feasting at the public institutions.

CHRISTMAS TREE ENTERTAINMENT *Western Mail*, 31 December 1887

At Deri Mission church – which is one of the outlying Mission Districts of Gelligaer parish – there was a Christmas Tree entertainment on Thursday evening. Preceding the entertainment there was a tea, the tables being presided over by lady members of the congregation. The Rev. J. L. Meredith, M.A., rector of Gelligaer and rural dean, attended and opened the proceedings with a very appropriate address. The Christmas tree was loaded with articles of all kinds for sale which were readily disposed of. At intervals selections of vocal and instrumental music were rendered and enlivened the proceedings considerably.

FOCHRIW NEWS *Western Mail*, 4 January 1892

PARISH CHURCH Christmas Day was celebrated at the Parish Church with services at 8 and 11 a.m., 2.30 and 6 p.m. Celebrant was Rev. J. L. White (vicar) and evening service by Rev. E. Adams Evans B.A. The organist was Mr. W. P. Lawrence, Mus. Bac.

CYMANFA GANU United service of song by Nazareth (Deri) and Noddfa was held on Christmas Day at Nazareth.

CAROL SERVICE at Carmel Vestry by teachers and pupils last week. After the concert, each child received a present from the Christmas tree, Santa Claus being Mr. T. Walters

BARGOED, BAZAAR AND SALE OF WORK *Merthyr Express*, 4 January 1892

On New Year's Day a bazaar was held in the Bargoed Board Schools, in aid of the St. Gwladys Church building fund. The tree and stalls were very tastefully decorated. At intervals during the evening, concerts took place in an adjoining class-room, and there was also an art gallery, both of which were largely patronised.

The chancel was built during the lifetime of the late Canon Harries, rector of Gelligaer, and now the nave is being completed and will be opened towards the end of this month, at a cost of £1,600. The Rev. T. Jesse Jones, M.A., rector of Gelligaer will officiate.

South Wales Daily News, 26 December 1893

On Sunday the services at the Parish Church, Gelygaer, and the outlying mission churches of St. Gwladys, Bargoed, Cwm Ysgnyddgwyn, Cwmfelin, and St. Mary's, Trelewis were made special, the sermons being preached by the Rev. T. Jesse Jones, M. A., rector, and his curates, on behalf of the Curates' Aid Society, for which the offertory was collected. The Rev. Canon Roberts, Canon Missioner for the Diocese of Llandaff, was the preacher at Holy Trinity Church, Ystrad Mynach, on Sunday where the offertory at each service was in aid of the Society for Promoting the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

BARGOED Monmouth Guardian and Bargoed and Caerphilly Observer, 6 August 1915

The well-known local musician and composer, Mr. David Roberts, L.T.S.C., the popular choir-master at Calfarina Congregational Church, has been appointed as conductor of the annual musical festival to be held at Carmel, Fochriw on Christmas Day. This cymanfa has for many years been one of the most popular held in the valley.

BARGOED NOTES Pioneer, 30 December 1916

Non-conformist churches in the Bargoed district met at Calfarina Church, Bargoed on Christmas Day. There were large congregations, the presidents being the Rev. J. Griffith Jones, Gilfach, the Rev. D. J. Jenkins, Bargoed, and Mr. Walter Lewis, J.P., miners' agent. The excellent singing of the various hymns and anthems was listened to and thoroughly enjoyed. Dr. Evans was pleased with the work of the choristers.

THE CHRISTMAS PRIZE Merthyr Express, 5 January 1929

At the Fochriw Church Hall on Thursday and Saturday last the members of St. Mary's Sunday School under the conductorship of Mr. Kerkeley Angell, achieved a fine success in their performance of the Christmas cantata, "The Christmas Surprize" The singing, dresses and stage effects were good.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS Railway Companies Arrangements for Local Excursionists Evening Express, 19 December 1894

The only excursion offered to South Wales holiday makers this Christmas-tide is that of a fortnight's stay in Ireland. Both the Great Western and London and North Western Railway Companies are running on Thursday, December 20, in conjunction with the London and North Western Railway Company's steamers, a cheap excursion to Dublin, via Holy-head. Cardiff passengers start on Thursday morning from the Crockertown Station at 6am, and are joined by tourists from Swansea, Carmarthen, Builth Road, Merthyr, Dowlais, Rhymney, Tredegar, Newport, Abergavenny, Hereford, &c., tickets being issued at fares ranging from 17s. to 19s. (third class, for the double journey).

The Great Western Railway Company carry passengers to the same destination from New Milford, starting there from at 10.30 a.m., through Pembroke, Tenby, Carmarthen, Swansea, and Neath. This excursion leaves Cardiff at four o'clock, and is joined by a contingent from Gloucester and Cheltenham and another from Merthyr and Dowlais. The train travels via, Crewe and Holyhead, and passengers may be booked to Oldcastle on payment of an additional 4s. to the Dublin fare. Passengers may return on any week-day up to and including Friday, January 4, 1895, by steamers sailing from the North Wall, Dublin, and permission is granted to break the railway journey at Chester in such cases where passengers are unable to reach their destination in one day.

On the Taff Vale and Rhymney Railways on Christmas Day trains will be run as on Sundays. On Boxing Day special relief trains will run in front of the ordinary trains, while several alterations in times are to be made on the Penarth line. Pleasure seekers from the Rhondda and Merthyr district are offered by the Taff Vale Company cheap tickets to run down to Cardiff on the Bank Holiday. On Saturday and Wednesday, December 22 and 26, market tickets will be issued from all stations on the Rhymney Railway line to Cardiff. and on the latter day a special tram will leave Cardiff for Rhymney, calling at all intermediate stations at eleven p.m. The same company, in conjunction with the Great Western, issue on Boxing Day, cheap return tickets to Cardiff from Merthyr and Dowlais at 2s. 6d. and from Abercanaid, Aberfan. Cwm Bargoed- and Bedlinog at 28d., returning from Cardiff at 6.10 or 9.45 p.m. the same day.

BARGOED Pioneer, 1 January 1916

Young Ashton (New Tredegar) and Tim Buckley (Brithdir) met in a 10-round contest at the Bargoed Pavilion on Christmas Eve, for a purse and side stake of £5. Buckley went the whole distance, and Ashton, who was the cleverer boy, gained a verdict on points.

FRENCHMEN AND DATE OF THE INTERNATIONAL Evening Express, 31 December 1909

French Rugby men are severely criticising their governing body for fixing upon New Year's Day as the date for their inter-national with Wales at Swansea. They point out that their New Year's Day corresponds as a family gathering with our Christmas Day, and instance what an inconvenient date December 25 would be for the Anglo-Welsh test. Already two or three of the chosen French fifteen have cried off, chiefly for family reasons.

BARGOED, FEVER South Wales Daily News, 3 December 1878

The fever still continues at this place, but no fresh cases have been reported during the past few days. Every sanitary precaution that can be taken is being adopted by owners of houses here.

BARGOED, FEVER South Wales Daily News, 12 December 1878

The fever is abating rapidly at this place.

BARGOED, FEVER Western Mail, 17 December 1881

At this place the fever among young children continues to rage badly. In one house there are no less than five children lying ill, and elsewhere there have been several fatal cases. Notwithstanding the sanitary precautions adopted by the parochial authorities, there does not appear to be any abatement of the epidemic.

PITIFUL STORY AND GRAVE COMPLAINT Evening Express 14 December 1909

At a meeting of the Rhymney Valley School Managers on Monday ... Mr. R. E. Roberts, his Majesty's inspector of schools, in his report ... the attendance at the Aberbargoed Infants' School during the year had suffered considerably from sickness among the scholars and the school was closed for several weeks. On the day of inspection 50 per cent of the scholars were absent on account of an epidemic of measles. Mr. Lewis Watkins called the attention of the managers to a resolution which he had moved at a former meeting, when he inquired why the schools were not closed at Aberbargoed ... he was surprised at the laxity and lack of appreciation of the seriousness of the circumstances which had characterised the authorities. They had allowed the matter to go on until 60 per cent. of the children attending the schools were prostrated by the disease before they sanctioned the closing of the schools. He understood that Dr. Wade, when he was approached on the matter, had resisted the closing of the schools, and had shown an old circular from the Local Government Board to the effect that measles were not to be regarded as a serious disease, inasmuch as children when they once had it did not get a recurrence.

This had, unhappily, proved to be true in Aberbargoed for numerous children had died by reason of the disease, and, therefore, could not contract it a second time. No fewer than 30 houses had lost one or more children and in one family four children had died, and there were several cases where two members of a family had passed away. There was no necessity to have a thousand children down before the schools were closed. He moved that the attention of the education committee be drawn again to the matter, and that they be asked why the schools were kept open. They were down to 40 per cent before the school was closed, and in one class there were 70 out of 80 absent. The resolution was carried. Spread of the Epidemic The epidemic of measles at Aberbargoed has now spread to the Glamorgan side of the valley. This has necessitated the closing of the Gilfach Schools. A large number of cases have also been discovered at Bargoed.

BARGOED JOINT BOARD SCHOOLS South Wales Daily News, 20 December 1878

The examiner's report of the Gelligaer and Bargoed Joint Board Schools is as follows:

Mixed school: The schools have passed an exceedingly good examination. It is evident that the master must have worked most assiduously throughout the year to produce such good results in a mixed school. The only part in the elementary work which was not satisfactory was the composition of the fifth and sixth. The grammar was highly

satisfactory. The geography was very fair, but not thorough enough. Music is well taught. The needlework, considering it is taught by the infant mistress, who has much to do in her own school, was creditable to her.

Infant school: This department is in a most satisfactory condition. The discipline is exceedingly good, and the classes are very carefully and successfully instructed. All that is wanted is a little more system in teaching lessons on common things.

RUSH OF ACCIDENTS IN RHYMNEY VALLEY *Evening Express* 14 December 1906

A man named Stanley Webster, of 6, Capel-street, Bargoed, sustained internal injuries at the coke ovens, Bargoed, to-day. Dr. Reidy attended to him, but the case is likely to prove fatal.

A black Christmas will be experienced at many homes in the Rhymney Valley. Yesterday there were five accidents reported at the Bargoed Pit and five at the Elliot Collieries alone, while there was a fatal accident at Coedymoeth and another mishap at Bargoed, which also proved fatal.

BOXING NIGHT SCENE AT BARGOED *Evening Express* 30 December 1903

At Tredegar Police-court on Tuesday, Geo. Budd, 22, carpenter, and James Smith, 23, mason, were charged with riotous conduct at Bargoed, on December 26, and with assaulting Police-constables Thomas and Jenkins whilst in the execution of their duty. Both prisoners pleaded not guilty. Police-constable Jenkins said that he and his fellow officer saw the two men behaving in a disorderly manner on Christmas night, and ordered them off. On the following day they saw them again behaving disorderly, and he (Police-constable Jenkins) asked Budd for his name. Budd replied, "Yes, you can have it now," and struck him a violent blow in the eye, which was blackened, and his nose cut. Smith attacked Police-constable Thomas, and a severe struggle took place, civilians having to be called in to assist in securing the prisoners, who were most violent. During the struggle he (Police-constable Jenkins) was kicked in the side and struck several times. Police-constable Thomas said Smith struck him on the ear, and he was kicked several times. Budd alleged he had been provoked by Police-constable Jenkins before he struck him. This was denied by the police officer. The Chairman said the police must be protected, and as an object lesson the prisoners would be fined £10 each, or two months' imprisonment with hard labour.

A CHRISTMAS SACRILEGE

BARGOED WESLEYAN CHURCH BROKEN INTO *Weekly Mail*, 31 December 1904

At eight o'clock on Christmas morning Mr. George Hollifield, caretaker of the Wesleyan Church, Bargoed, discovered that in the early hours of the morning the chapel had been broken into. The sacred edifice was entirely ransacked. Entrance must have been gained through the window, for two huge panes of glass were broken. Several desks were smashed to matchwood, apparently by a coal pick, which was found inside the chapel. The total savings belonging to the Band of Hope children were taken away, the amount of which has not been realised. It appears that the burglars had spent some hours inside, for signs were manifest that a fire had been kept burning, and a quantity of coal had been used. The sacred edifice was left in an extremely filthy and disgraceful condition.

A CHRISTMAS ALTERCATION *Evening Express*, 9 December 1916

A fight between two hunchback labourers last Christmas had its sequel in Bargoed Police-court last Friday, when R. Hawkins and Thos. Morgan - the combatants - were summoned for obstructing the highway by fighting. They were under the influence of drink at the time, and left the district when the summonses were issued. Defendants surrendered last week, and in court pleaded guilty. A fine of 10s or six days, was imposed on each.

SHOP FIRE AT BARGOED *Evening Express*, 16 December 1910

A slight outbreak of fire occurred in Bargoed on Thursday evening at the shop of Mr. Stephen Evans, confectioner, Hanbury-road, Bargoed. Fortunately the flames were quickly subdued and the damage, which was slight, was contained to the windows, which were stocked with Christmas dainties. A number of local tradesmen assisted in extinguishing the flames before the fire brigade arrived.

GELLIGAER COUNCIL AND FIRE BRIGADE CAPTAIN *Weekly Mail*, 11 December 1909

At a meeting of the Gelligaer Council on Monday Mr. Edward Richards, J.P., presiding, a recommendation came from the fire brigade committee that the captain (Mr. Tom Jones, Bargoed) be supplied with a water-proof overcoat.

Mr. W. Hammonds: Is this a Christmas box? (which raised much laughter). "I should like to know why the captain should be treated differently from anybody else".

Councillor Joe Morgan thought the fire brigade was expensive, and did no good to any part of the parish.

The Chairman said that it was unfortunate they did not have sufficient fires for the brigade to prove its efficiency.

Mr. W. B. Lloyd: I think it is fortunate.

Mr. William Hammonds (Lab.): If we are going to give Christmas boxes let us give them to all.

It was decided to grant the captain the overcoat.

HOT-POTS AT BARGOED *Evening Express*, 26 December 1907

Although Bargoed has had a very prosperous year, the poor are numerous, and the tradespeople organised hot-pots for to-day. About 300 children had a meal in the Hanbury-road temporary chapel. Mr. W. B. Lloyd was chairman of the committee, Mr. Ben Lewis (Lloyds Bank) treasurer and Mr. W. Ebsworth, solicitor, secretary.

RHYMNEY VALLEY CHRISTMAS *Evening Express*, 27 December 1909

On Christmas Day 560 persons, chiefly young children and aged people, partook of dinner at the Salvation Army Barracks, Bargoed, the expense being borne by Mr. W. B. Lloyd, contractor, Bargoed. There was a large increase in the number this year, the total last year being 320. Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd visited the building during the day and assisted in entertaining the poor.

TRADESMEN'S ATTRACTIVE DISPLAYS *Evening Express*, 22 December 1908

Preparations in Cardiff shops for the usual Christmas display were never carried out with greater activity nor on a more complete scale than on the present occasion, and the general effect has never been more tasteful and effective

CHRISTMAS IN CARDIFF *South Wales Daily News*, 27 December 1879

Christmas was passed pleasantly at the Maindy Barracks. By consent of the officers the sergeants and non-commissioned officers of the brigade held a ball on Friday evening. One of the large wings built for the unmarried soldiers, not at present used, was tastefully decorated. A quadrille band was engaged, and about 100 persons responded to the invitations sent.

SEASONABLE CHEER AT THE WORKHOUSE *Evening Express*, 27 December 1909

The master and matron of the Cardiff Workhouse and the officials generally this year laid themselves out more than ever to beautify the house and to provide for its inmates a merry time ... The general scheme of decoration was artistically carried out through in the wards and corridors, and the Christmas trees in the nursery and children's hospital made the festival a tangible reality to the little ones, who had looked forward with so much anticipation to the red letter day.

The great event on Christmas Day was, of course, the dinner of roast beef and toothsome pudding, &c., washed down by the measured allowance of a pint of ale per man and half a pint each for women, whilst for those who abstain from this beverage there was tea and coffee and mineral waters. The beer was again supplied (free of cost) by Mr. T. Jenkins, Marchioness of Bute Hotel, Frederick-street, who is one of the guardians, the supply being a total of 162 gallons for the work-house and the institution at Ely.

The large room whilst the feast was in progress rather presented the appearance of an old baronial hall with guardians waiting upon retainers rather than an assembly of poor folk dependent upon the rates. The attendance of guardians and friends was more numerous than last year.

QUIZ ANSWERS BELOW
THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF GHS.
IF YOU HAVE COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS ON THIS NEWSLETTER
SUPPLEMENT, OR HAVE SOME INTERESTING FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHS OR
STORIES FOR INCLUSION IN A FUTURE SUPPLEMENT
PLEASE CONTACT

www.gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk or chairmen@gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. In the song, *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, nine what did my true love bring to me? **Ladies Dancing**
2. How many presents IN TOTAL did my true love bring to me? **78**
3. What is the name of George Bailey's guardian angel in the film, *It's a Wonderful Life*? **Clarence Oddbody**
4. In which Christmas pantomime does Widow Twankey appear? **Aladdin**
5. What Christmas item was invented by (or, at least, is attributed to) London baker and wedding-cake specialist, Tom Smith, in 1847? **Christmas Cracker**
6. From which country did St. Nicholas come? **Turkey**
7. Who was the first British monarch to broadcast a Christmas message? **George V (1932)**
8. Which popular 1950s Christmas song by child star Jimmy Boyd was originally banned by the Catholic Church in Boston because it was said to mix sex and Christmas? ***I saw momma kissing Santa Claus***
9. In what year did Band Aid's record, *Do they know it's Christmas*, top the UK's charts? **1984**
10. Who wrote *Auld Lang Syne*? **Robert Burns**
11. London's Trafalgar Square Christmas tree is traditionally given by which country? **Norway**
12. From which country does the poinsettia plant originate? **Mexico**
13. Who was Scrooge's dead business partner in Dickens's *Christmas Carol*? **Jacob Marley**
14. What date is St. Stephen's Day? **26th December**
15. Donner and Blitzen are the names of two of Father Christmas's reindeer – what do their names mean in English? **Thunder and lightning**
16. Christmas Island, a territory of the Commonwealth of Australia, is located in which ocean? **Indian**
17. Yorkshire man, William Strickland, is believed to have brought the first what to England in 1526? **Turkey**
18. What is New Year's Eve called in Scotland? **Hogmanay**
19. Who wrote *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*? **Dr. Seuss**
20. Many American states, including Georgia and Indiana, have towns which share which same Christmassy name? **Santa Claus**

It (is supposed to have) happened on 11th December – but which year?

21. Llewelyn ap Gruffydd (Llewelyn the Last), last native Prince of Wales, was killed at Cilmeri, near Builth Wells. **1282**
22. Louis XVI was executed for treason and crimes against the state **1793**
23. 1st yacht race across the Atlantic (started in New Jersey). **1866**
24. British High Commander, Henry Bartle Frere, presented an ultimatum to the Zulu king – submit to British rule or face war. **1878**
25. David Lloyd George formed his British War Government (may have been 9th December!). **1916**
26. Edward VII made a radio broadcast announcing his abdication in order to marry Wallis Simpson. **1936**
27. U.S.A. declared war on Germany and Italy. **1941**
28. Elvis Presley's *Blue Hawaii* album went to the number 1 spot and JFK provided military helicopters and crews to South Vietnam. **1961**
29. Muhammad Ali fought his 61st and last fight, losing to Trevor Berbick and Spacelab 1 arrived at Kennedy Space Centre. **1981**
30. Delegates from 150 industrial nations attended a UN climate conference in Kyoto where they reached an agreement to control heat-trapping greenhouse gases (Kyoto Protocol). **1997**